Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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" For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

The Nihilist appeal lately published in these columns for the first time in America has resulted rather disastrously for one of its authors, the expulsion of Pierre Lavroff from French territory having been demanded by Russia and granted by the new De Freycinet ministry.

An enthusiastic Chicago correspondent of the Louisville "Courier-Journal" predicts that George C. Miln, the latest acquisition from the pulpit to the infidel ranks, within two years will be "recognized throughout America as the greatest leader known in pure agnosticism, or as the foremost member of the American bar, or as the greatest of living actors."

The British parliament has again unseated the persistent and plucky Bradlaugh, and he has returned to Northampton to ask its radical cobblers to send him back again, which they are sure to do. Meanwhile some of the newspapers in England are urging the people of the district to pay no more taxes until parliamentary representation is restored to them. Thus all things work together for Liberty. Whether for sound or unsound reasons, it is a good thing for the people to accustom themselves to resisting taxation. The force of habit is strong.

Congressman Crapo, our would-be governor, is president of the Mechanics' National Bank of New Bedford, and a majority of his associates on the national committee on banking and currency are either presidents or directors of national banks. No wonder they desire the charters extended for twenty years. But, according to the rules of the Massachusetts general court, no legislator is allowed to vote on any question, or serve on a committee to consider any question, in which he has a private interest separate from the public interest. If this is not the case in Washington, it should be

The "Saturday Evening Express" of Boston recently published a well-written, temperate, and forcible letter from "An Ex-Juryman," who complained that, while serving on a jury panel at the January term of the superior criminal court for Suffolk county, he was steadily challenged and set aside by the assistant district attorney, Mr. Adams, because in two cases previously tried he had voted for acquittal; and further, that, to prevent attention from being drawn to this persistent exclusion of one man, the clerk, when drawing his name from the box, summarily threw it aside without announcing it. Such conduct before a judicial tribunal is simply shameful, but yet it is chiefly important as fresh evidence of the manifold forms of corruption engendered by the State, and of the impossibility of long preserving any good thing within the confines of its devilish influence. Trial by jury, as it originally existed, was a splendid institution, the principal safeguard against oppression; and, could it be restored to its original status, by which the jury was entitled to judge, not only of the fact, but of the law and of the justice of the law, it would be well worth the saving. But nothing tending to secure the individual's rights against invasion can be saved within the State. And yet, as we happen to know, the man who enters this well-founded complaint is a member of a party whose principal object is to endow with omnipotence, or the next thing to it, the institution that has wronged him. In other words, he is a prominent Greenbacker and State Socialist.

Gladstone's character weakens daily. In regard to Bradlaugh he has shown himself a more contemptible coward than we supposed him to be. On this matter we can do no better than to echo the opinion of the Philadelphia "Evening Telegraph": "Mr. Gladstone's attitude towards this Bradlaugh case has been strangely pusillanimous, and has tended not a little to prevent the only proper determination of it from being achieved. The premier has more than once as good as admitted that Bradlaugh's right to a seat in the house of commons is as good as his own, but he not only refuses to take any active steps for securing him and his constituents their rights, but gives as much negative aid as he dares to the men who are bent upon violating a principle which cannot be safely violated by any parliamentary majority in this age of the world, in countries like England and America."

The apathy and cowardice exhibited by the educated classes in relation to all questions of an industrial or social order is one of the most discouraging obstacles in the pathway of the sincere reformer. Their interests are so intimately allied to and dependent upon those of the directly privileged classes that the few among them who succeed in screwing up their courage to a point where they dare to honestly study such problems are rarely brave enough to honestly publish to the world the results of their investigations. The legal and clerical professions, and to some extent the medical; the men of science and art; the journalists, professors, and men of literature, — all who, so far as mental training goes, are best fitted for sociological inquiry stand in solid array, in attitudes either of inert, stolid indifference or of offensive warfare, to resist the progress of Liberty and Justice. And this they do because, with rare exceptions, their names are to be found at the top of the pay-roll of the tyrants and the thieves. Directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, they are subsidized by capital and power. How much the more refreshing and encouraging it is, then, to read words so brave and true as those of Elisée Reclus, printed in another column! M. Reclus's name stands with the highest — perhaps is the highest — in the field of physical geography. The world over his authority is recognized. But his character being as irreproachable as his genius, and scientific study not having blunted his sympathetic instincts, he has not been able to turn a deaf ear to the claims of plundered labor. The independence of his character has been manifest throughout his life. At the time of the last revolutionary crisis in Paris he unhesitatingly joined the ranks of the Commune and fought therein. To escape the vengeance of the bloodthirsty Thiers he took refuge in Switzerland, where he has since remained, refusing to accept the amnesty that was finally offered. And now, to the consternation of oppressors everywhere, who know the potent influence of a trained intellect when enlisted for the right, he divides his time between the pursuit of scientific knowledge and a dauntless championship, by pen and voice, of the cause of the down-trodden. How eloquent and effective is his work Liberty's readers may judge by the sample now before them.

The steamer Austrian, from Liverpool, arrived in Boston harbor the other day with a large number of Hungarian emigrants on board. Five of them refused to be vaccinated. Valiant policemen then transferred these refractory and unreasonable beings who preferred to keep their blood pure to the quarantine steamer, and pinioned them, one by one, to the deck, while the doctor performed the objectionable operation. A cheerful welcome this to the "land of the *free* and the home of the *brave!*" It would seem that the State, not content with robbing, enslaving, and starving the people, must needs poison them also.

Mr. A. R. Parsons of Chicago writes to us as follows: "Liberty is certainly the ablest advocate of the policy of 'non-resistance,' or 'abstention,' in this country, but your readers hereabouts would like to have your views in a case where, like that of Greenwood, N. Y., the citizens had refused to pay taxes, and it was therefore proposed to use a 'cannon charge of buckshot' to compel them to do so, and as to whether, in such case, it is true 'Liberty' to return 'good for evil,' or take 'eye for eye' and 'tooth for tooth.'" Mr. Parsons's inquiry is a pertinent one, generally speaking, but in this special instance it is based on a misapprehension of the facts. There is no insurrection in the town of Greenwood. Of course, in the eyes of Mr. Parsons, if, as we presume, he is a believer in the State, there must be an insurrection there, since Governor Cornell has declared the town in a state of insurrection. God said, "Let there be light," and, to the devotee of the church, there was light. Governor Cornell says, "Let there be insurrection," and, to the devotee of the State, straightway there is insurrection. But the true philosopher sees neither light nor insurrection resulting from the behests of authority, human or divine. He knows only facts and their teachings, and the fact in this case is that the visitor to Greenwood discovers there, at least in a physical sense, naught but the utmost serenity and peace. It is true that the people of Greenwood, for reasons sufficient to themselves, have declined to pay their taxes, but no "charge of buckshot" can be poured into them, for they offer no resistance to the seizure of property. And this is just what troubles the authorities, *as non-resistance almost always does.* If they could pour buckshot into them, they could conquer them and bring them to terms. But against their "masterly inactivity" (what a happy phrase is that!) they have no weapon. For, if they seize property to sell at auction, no one will buy it, and, if they bring persons from other towns to bid, the collector, who is with the citizens, resigns his office, whereupon the sale cannot proceed. Of the efficacy of the policy of non-resistance and abstention Liberty could wish no better illustration. So much for Mr. Parsons's special case. Now, if he asks us the general question whether it is always better to "turn the other cheek," we can only answer that "circumstances alter cases," and decline to discuss the matter independently of circumstances further than to affirm most emphatically that, until the people shall be utterly stripped of their power to read, speak, write, and print, violence from them can only dull the edge of their most powerful weapon, reason.

Liberty.

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"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions."—PROUDHON.

Liberty and Method.

The starting-point, from the standard of Liberty, of all sociological investigation is the Individual. How marked and infinite is the diversity of individualities becomes more and more apparent to every close and constant observer of men.

Even the best disciplined mind cannot escape seeing right, justice, and scientific method in reform largely from the standpoint of its own organization and environments. The man of theory and abstractions listens in semi-contempt to the elaborately contrived schemes of the practical man whose very purpose is to put the former's own theories directly or indirectly into practice. "No," says he; "you are simply lopping off the branches and wasting your time, and every blow that is not struck straight at the tap-roots is worse than useless. You must strike as I strike and *where* I strike, or your blow counts for nothing."

A man may be gifted with giant intellect in certain lines of mental analysis, and yet be all the more prone to that species of mental limitation which, failing to understand an entirely different mental organization, rudely consigns its plans and specifications for the practical application of his own thought to the intellectual waste-basket as utterly useless.

The only man capable of understanding wherein every mind that is willing to work for justice is capable of efficient coöperation in reform is the philosopher, by which is meant that large and fully-rounded man who, having a little of all mental qualities in his composition, can appreciate all. But this rounded balance of qualities is always at the expense of the exceptional power of the specialist, all of whose forces are concentrated upon one method of analysis.

It is quite common to maintain that the well-balanced, rounded philosopher is the intellectually great man. No type of man, however, represents the great man,—not even that which combines to some extent all types. We wish it distinctly understood that, in the ethics and philosophy of Liberty, there is no provision for great men. The "great man" of history is a standing nuisance, and has no place in our system. There is no great nor small in true social economy. Every man is made for his work, and the only person whom it troubles us to dispose of is the man who, if ever designed for any manner or method of work, refuses to do it. But even the idler is neither great nor small. He goes out of the calculation as a nonentity.

At a recent gathering of thinkers in the line of Liberty this very matter of method came into prominence. There was the same purpose in every member of the company, but a marked mental organization in each differing from every other. One gentleman of excellent organizing capacity had a scheme on foot for gradually shaming and driving the State out of existence by absorbing its functions into practical coöperation among employers and their help, and thus finally worrying it out through indirect means. To the abstract thinker before whom the scheme was laid, and who, by the way, has perhaps the keenest intellect on this continent in his line, all this indirect circumvention of the State was utterly futile. The State must be openly attacked and defied at its very citadel. Its guns must be dismounted, and its offices, titles, pretensions, and paraphernalia utterly demolished and abolished, before any scheme can acquire Liberty enough to give it an effectual test.

Now, two such positive and diverse organizations as these minds can never be made to see alike through argument. True conviction is simply the result of seeing, and each man will always see through his own glass. All that argument can ever do is to clean the glasses. The fact is that both are right without mutually knowing it. And we say that, if any man has any practical scheme by which to push the State adrift through individual coöperation, his duty is simply to go straight about its realization. *To him, as he is made up*, it is the most effectual method. All that we demand is the inexorable condition that his scheme shall entertain no element of compulsion, and that the cost of executing it shall be thrown upon no unwilling shoulders.

As we are made up, we believe that the most manly and effectual method of dealing with the State is to demand its immediate and unconditional surrender as a usurper, and to flatly and openly challenge its assumed right to forestall and crush out the voluntary associative government and regulation of individuals by themselves in all things. But, if others think that indirect methods are preferable, all that they have to do is to set about asserting themselves, as we assert ourselves. By all means accept nobody as authority. All mental popery is impossible in the very essence of our philosophy. Let each man do his work as to him seems good, in right dead earnest. Then, later, as we come to compare notes, we may fairly judge one another by our fruits, and arrive at harmony through its only legitimate channel,—the largest Liberty of action and method.

A Solution That Does Not Solve.

Mr. Charles H. Barlow of Michigan is a reader of Liberty, but he cannot read it to much purpose; otherwise, he would not write to the Boston "Herald" that "the only way to disentangle the Gordian knot of capital vs. labor" and practically solve the labor problem is to "take the axe" and strike out for the wilderness. This seems to us little better than nonsense. Not that we object to the spread of agriculture, if more agriculture is needed. The axe and spade are good tools, and as many of them should be used as are necessary to supply the people with the articles which they are instrumental in producing. But the same is true of all useful tools. Why "take the axe" more than the saw or the lathe or the steam-engine? Let all of them be used in their proper proportions. But what has this to do with the labor problem of to-day, which is to give to each producer an equivalent for his product? It is of little consequence whether we use spades or saws, if both our crops and our houses are to be stolen from us by the usurer. Mr. Barlow's remedy, to be a remedy at all, requires each man to produce entirely for himself. But this means an abandonment of the immeasurable benefits of modern commerce for the sake of getting rid of its evils. Consequently his remedy is not the true one, for the true one must not only preserve, but increase, these benefits by eradicating the evils. The solution offered by Mr. Barlow means either nothing at all or the abolition of the division of labor, and is strictly on a par with those multitudinous other solutions which propose the abolition of machinery, competition, credit, and all the other industrial and commercial forces by which modern civilization has been developed. The real solution lies not in the destruction of these forces, but in the discovery and application of new principles that shall regulate their action beneficently. These principles, according to Liberty, are Free Men and Free Money, which can be had only by the abolition of the State. The cry, "Take the axe," is a very specious one. It has a sturdy sound and so captivates the unthinking, but a little examination reveals its hollowness.

The State Its Own Outlaw.

But for our firm conviction that the State is doomed by its own depravity, we should be exceptionally startled at some of the features of the anti-Mormon bill. This infamous instrument of outrage upon the rights of conscience not only provides that a person shall be punished for practising his religion, but literally makes it a crime for him to believe that his religion is true.

A winning point, however, for the Mormons, if they only knew how to utilize it, is the fact that the crime of believing that polygamy is sanctioned by God is to be punished by dismissing the religious martyr from full fellowship with the State. If the Mormons were only bright enough to accept the penalty as an honor, and be thankfully rid of fellowship with an organization composed of such thieves and bigots, they would be on the way to do humanity a great service.

Of course the State is so lost to shame and decency that it continues to tax by force those whom it by force expels from the machine; but this should all the more animate the Mormons to wage an uncompromising war of abolition upon so shameless an institution. Those who are expelled from full fellowship with the State because of their religious opinions can do no better service than to strike hands with those who are forced into fellowship with it against their will, and move for its utter abolition.

So far as being deprived of fellowship with such a State is concerned, the Mormons should immediately send a memorial to Congress, thanking it for the honor conferred, and reminding it that enforced obligation to pay taxes under such circumstances rests on the same moral basis as ordinary brigandage, and can only be tolerated so long as fate permits the victim to remain the under dog.

It should have been stated some time ago in these columns that that energetic and intelligent Liberal, Mr. E. C. Walker, has changed his place of residence, and may be addressed hereafter at Norway, Benton County, Iowa. Mr. Walker is doing an excellent work in the West. To be sure, the Liberal League, which organization he actively represents, is somewhat conservative, but he is a thorough radical himself, and can be depended upon to sow seed of the right sort.

Stilson Hutchins, editor of the Washington "Post," was talking recently with a party, of which Gail Hamilton was one, about the Mormons. Hutchins took a decided stand against them, when Gail broke in, saying: "The only difference, Mr. Hutchins, between you and the Mormon men is that they drive their team all abreast, and you drive yours tandem."

The national house of representatives voted a few days ago to remit the duties paid on the importation of copies of the revised edition of the New Testament. This is a triumph for free trade, but a blow at free thought. The contradiction, however, is not unnatural. Consistent loyalty to Liberty is inconsistent with the nature and functions of the State.

"Governments," says the Chicago "Express," "cannot, if they would, give men their liberties." Yes, they can; but in doing so they would commit suicide. The only purpose of government is to deprive men of their liberties.

It is to be noticed that the advocates of compulsion invariably wish to do all the compelling themselves. To being compelled they are as averse as Liberty herself. "My archy or an-archy," said Proudhon; "there is no middle ground."

A peddler was arrested lately in Oakland, California, for selling Paine's "Age of Reason" without a license, but the jury acquitted the prisoner under the statute allowing the unlicensed sale of religious literature.

Anarchy and Universal Suffrage.

The following is an extract from a masterly discourse recently delivered by Elisée Reclus, the eminent geographer, before the Section of Outlaws at St. Etienne, a branch of the International Working People's Association:

There are socialists and socialists, many will observe, and of the various schools which is to prevail? Certainly, if one trusts solely to appearances, there seems a great variety of forms, but this is only an illusion. At bottom there are but two principles confronting each other: on one side, that of government; on the other, that of anarchy: Authority and Liberty. The names in which parties enwrap themselves are of no consequence. Just as under the pretended republicans of today we find petty dictators, so many Louis Fourteenths in miniature, so we discover Anarchists beneath all revolutionists. The governmentalists, be the chief of State king, consul, emperor, president, council of three or of ten, wish to hold the power in their hands, dispose of offices, salaries, and honorary titles, and award decorations and favors; they wish to be the masters, and to start every initiative from above: they one and all proceed on the idea that they are animated by a supernatural power to think, wish, and act for their subjects All claim obedience to their decrees and laws; like the popes and ancient kings by divine right, they are infallible. Look at your representatives and the representatives of your representatives,—that is, your ministers! Do they not scorn an imperative commission as an insult offered to their dignity? Have they not devised for themselves special legislation which places them outside of the laws enacted for common mortals? By recommendations, endorsements, and demands for office, honors, and favors are they not inevitably accomplices of all the servants of preceding governments? Bureaus, administrations, legislation,—all remain the same: the mechanism has not changed: what matters it if the mechanicians have changed their clothing? The word Republic is certainly a fine one, since it means the "Public thing" and would seem to attribute to all who call themselves republicans a spirit of disinterested solidarity in the defense of the common cause; but the name has lost its real meaning since it was captured by the governmentalists, and indicates no longer a change of system, but only a change of persons.

On the other hand, all revolutionary acts are, by their very nature, essentially anarchistic, no matter what the power which seeks to profit by them. The man, weary of injustice, who throws himself into the fray for the triumph of the right becomes, at least for the moment, his own master; his associates are his companions, not his superiors; he is free while the struggle lasts. From time to time history brings us face to face with grand revolts, and, if we try to distinguish the various elements confounded therein and assign to each its *rôle*, we see that the active factor, the only one productive of results instrumental in the progress of humanity, is the anarchistic element,—that is, the element proceeding from individual initiative, from personal wills leagued together without the intervention of a master. From time immemorial authority has desired to maintain routine, and from time immemorial the anarchistic intervention of revolt has been needed to destroy barriers and give air to the stifled people. All history is nothing else than the series of revolutions by which the individual gradually extricates himself from servitude and labors to become his own master by destroying the State. What matters it if the majority of historians relate the opinions of kings and princes and describe their governmental expedients, their efforts to aggrandize themselves at the expense of the people? They misconstrue the life of humanity. In the same way a physician sees in the life of a man only the history of his diseases.

The old motto of the revolutionists, handed down to us from century to century, which has finally become an official formula, but a formula void of meaning under any government whatsoever,—"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," or rather, Solidarity,—proves that anarchy has always been the ideal of successive generations. Can the word Liberty have a meaning if it does not imply the integral development of the individual in such a manner that he may have all the physical strength, health, and beauty compatible with his race, enjoy all the knowledge that his native intelligence can acquire, and choose without hindrance the labor best befitting him? So, the word Equality is but a lie if private property, inheritance, industrial speculations, and the possession of power involve the contrast between wealth and poverty, condemning one class to privation, disease, and sometimes vice, while another lives in comfort, having health, facilities for study, and the joys of science and art. Finally, fraternal solidarity can be born only among men freely associated, grouping themselves according to their inclinations, and distributing the common task with a view to their talents and mutual convenience. Any other solidarity is that of the wolf and the lamb, of the master and his slaves.

But, they tell us, the health of the social organism is only a chimera! The grand words Liberty, Equality, Solidarity are only words, good to figure on the pediments of buildings, but without practical application. And mental sluggards, like the privileged classes, cling to the existing order, however bad it is, as if it could offer them the slightest guarantee of stability. But can this society be truly said to have a real existence? Is it not dependent upon the constant change, the incessant modification of its tottering equilibrium? Is that a viable society where more than nine-tenths of its members are condemned to die before old age for want of comfort and harmony, where interests are so divided that wise cultivation of the soil and a truly scientific disposition of its products are impossible, where nearly half the wealth is lost through disordered distribution, and where the manufacturers, driven by competition or by the necessity of living, occupy themselves in adulterating products, lowering the standard of merchandise, and even in changing food into poison? Is that a society where so many thousands of women have no choice except between suicide, robbery, and prostitution? In so far as it is a society of rulers and proprietors it is only struggle and disorder, and really constitutes that which in current phraseology is commonly called "anarchy." Fortunately the true anarchy—that is, the rebellion of individuals and the free association of the rebels—comes to introduce into this diseased organism a few principles of cure and renovation. It was in spite of the divine authority with which priests claim to be armed that free minds gained the right to think in their own fashion and freed themselves from the stupid fear of hell and the silly hope of heaven. It was in spite of the holiness with which tradition had invested kings and governments of all sorts that the people, by revolution after revolution, finally tore from their masters at least a few fragments of Liberty and the factitious recognition — pending something better — of their rights of sovereignty. In the family, where the husband and father was formerly absolute master, it has also been by continual insurrections at the fireside that the wife and child have at last got possession of some of the personal rights which the law always denied them, but which public opinion is beginning to concede to them. Likewise, if language develops and improves, it is in spite of academic routine; if science takes huge strides and achieves marvellous results by its industry, it is in spite of the professors and official *savants;* and it is also by successive revolts that art conquers new territories. Thus I ever vivify the ancient legend of the miraculous fruit which gives the knowledge of good and evil: it is the fruit that the tree of science bears. According to the priests, it is from this fruit of which the sons of men have eaten that all evil comes; according to the revolutionists, on the contrary, it is from this fruit of knowledge that all good has come. Without the spirit of revolt we should still be wild animals, nibbling the grass and devouring the roots of the earthly paradise. All progress, all life upon earth is the work of incessant rebellion. Isolated, the rebels are consecrated to death, but their example is not lost, and other malcontents rise up after them; these unite, and from defeat to defeat finally arrive at victory.

Nevertheless, many people think, or pretend to think, that the book of revolutions is closed forever, thanks to what is commonly called universal suffrage. We are to find a safety-valve in the right to vote granted thirty-three years ago by the provisional government. . . . . .

But French males and majors vote in vain; they can only choose masters, petty kings who can avenge themselves for a single day of humiliation by years of insolence and irresponsible government. The elections over, the government makes war and peace without consulting the rabble of its subjects; notwithstanding the elections, millions of wretches wallow in the mire of misery, millions of laborers remain at the mercy of capital, which pens them up in its mines and factories; the uncertainty of the future is a load upon all. Has universal voting dispersed the corporations of robbers who speculate on labor and gather in all the profits? Has it diminished the number of merchants who sell by false weights and of advocates who plead indifferently for the just and the unjust? The plainest result of the substitution of so-called universal suffrage for restricted suffrage and suffrage exercised at the royal will is the increase of that hideous class of politicians who make a trade of living by their voice, paying court first to the electors and then, once in office, turning to those above them to beg for offices, sinecures, and pensions. To the aristocracy of birth, capital, and official position is added another aristocracy, that of the stump. Of course men are to be found among the candidates who are moved by good intentions and who are firmly resolved not to prove false to the programme which they have mapped out during the campaign; but, however good their intentions, they none the less find themselves on the day after the voting in circumstances different from those of the night before. They are a part of a privileged class, and, in spite of themselves, they become men of privilege. Invested by their fellow-citizens with the power to know everything and decide everything, they imagine themselves, in fact, competent to deal with all questions; their science is universal; they are at once *savants*, engineers, manufacturers, merchants, generals, admirals, diplomats, and administrators, and the whole life of the nation must be elaborated in their brains. Where is the individual strong enough to resist this flattery of the electors? Heir of kings and, like kings, disposing of affairs with a supreme comprehension, the deputy ends like kings, seized with the vertigo of power: proportionately he lifts his whims into laws, surrounds himself with courtiers whom it pleases him to despise, and creates self-interests directly antagonistic to those of the multitude which he is reputed to represent.

So far, our profession as electors has consisted only in recruiting enemies among those who call themselves our friends, or even among those who pretend to belong, as we do, to the party of social revendication. Must we untiringly continue this task of dupes, incessantly fill this cask which empties as rapidly, forever try to climb this rock which tumbles back upon us? Or should we busy ourselves with our own work, which is to establish, by ourselves and without delegation, a society of free and equal men? To justify their participation in electoral intrigues, some revolutionary socialists claim to have no object in view except agitation. Passions being more excited during electoral struggles, they would take advantage of this fact to act more forcibly on the minds of the people and gain new adherents to the cause of the revolution. But does not the election itself mislead all these passions? The interest excited by elections is of the same order as that felt at the gaming-table. The course of the candidates at the balloting is like that of the horses at a hippodrome: people are eager to know who will win by a length or half-length; then, after the emotions excited by the struggle, they think the business finished until the races of the following year or decade, and go to their rest as if the real work was not yet to do. The elections serve only to start the revolutionists on a false scent and consequently waste their strength. As for us Anarchists, we remain in the ranks, equals of each other. Knowing that authority always results sadly to him who exercises it and to those who submit to it, we should feel ourselves dishonored were we to descend from our condition of free men to enroll ourselves on the list of mendicants of power. That business let us leave to the prideless people who like to crook the spine.

Besides, what need have we to enter a society not our own? In vain they tell us that the establishment of an anarchistic society is impossible; such a society already exists: once more, it is by moving that we have proved movement to be possible. In spite of the hostile conditions forced upon us by *bourgeoisie* and capitalistic society, anarchistic groups are springing up everywhere; they have no need of presidents or of privileged representatives; woman is not the inferior of man, nor is the foreigner deprived of the rights which the Frenchman enjoys; all these factitious distinctions made by institutions and laws have disappeared from our midst. Each employs himself according to his faculties, labors according to his strength without demanding additional reward for his superior merit. And while the so-called governing classes know how to set us no other example than that of trying to succeed at any price in extracting their incomes from the toil of another, in the ranks of the so-called governed classes are to be seen the rudiments of a world no longer that of priests and kings. There you find strength, because there you find labor and solidarity! But it is not enough to have strength; it is also necessary to have the confidence of its possession and the wisdom not to apply it hap-hazard, as has been done hitherto, in revolutions of caprice, in which blind instinct played the largest part. That, companions, was the special word that I had to say to you. Prepare yourselves for the grand struggle!

A Gentleman Who Objects to Liberty.

Mr Tucker sir I have just received a copy of your paper called Liberty. I have read some if it. two peices I will call your Attention to — —

gods wicked partners . . and the one. a game two can play at Now if you have such stuff in your Heart keep it there and do not corupt the world with it ——

I dont think such a paper fit for outhouse use

ELI CHENNY

kinderhooK Feb 22nd 1882

[We are happy to say that Mr. Cheney's closing sentiment commands our unqualified approval.—EDITOR LIBERTY.]

Crumbs from Liberty's Table.

As civilization advances, the necessity of law diminishes.—*Bullion.*

Men, in a free country, have the right not to work if the terms offered by their employers do not suit them. The condition of being employed is as voluntary as the condition of employing. The right to strike is just as sacred to the laborer as the right of suddenly discharging a thousand men is to the capitalist. The military force is not maintained for the purpose of destroying either right.—*New York Sun.*

It is a mistake to suppose that by an equal distribution of wealth is meant equality in quantity. The question, "Who is the Somebody?" is not based upon the fact that some people have more wealth than others, but upon the fact that Somebody has the wealth which somebody else has produced, and consequently ought to own. An equal distribution of wealth means such a distribution as will give to each producer his equitable proportion of what he has assisted to produce. If one man creates $100 worth of wealth in a day and another $10, it would not be equitable to give each half of the whole—i. e., $55. But neither is it equitable to give one $105 and the other only $5. But it is equitable to give $10 to the one who produced $10 and $100 to the one who produced $100, less their fair proportion of taxes.—*New York Truth.*

A FABLE.

The cat and the dog had a quarrel,
Each claiming its tail-wag most moral,
And going it strong
That the other was wrong,
And never could hope for the laurel.

Puss argued in elegant phrases:
"The tail wasn't made to give praises,
And wag when you're grateful,
But savage and hateful,—
And then you should shake it like blazes."

Then answered the dog: "Why not state your
Belief to our next Legislature,
And get them to grant you
A 'HEARING'—Why can't you?—
They'd soon make a change in my nature."

WILLOUGHBY W.

Nobodies.

Judging from the daily papers, one would infer that the great mass of the people in this community, or in this Commonwealth, are nobodies, and that only a small percentage of our population is of actual account. A lot of leading politicians who contrive to hold all the offices and run the government for the anonymous millions of their fellow-citizens,—these people are *somebodies*. The daily papers are full of their movements, sayings and doings. When they die, a column or two are devoted to their biographies and obituaries. We are told how "smart" they were, and how sumptuously they lived at the public expense. A short time ago "Horace Gray" was the current topic of the obsequious and laudatory press for days, until one became slightly bored with it, and refused to peruse articles, paragraphs, and despatches devoted to it. Newspaper readers were fairly surfeited with "Horace Gray." A great many people about us are daily entering the mists of death, who scarcely get a mere mention in the newspaper press, whose departures, indeed, do not create a ripple. But let two or three prominent lawyers, judges, or governors shuffle off the mortal coil of life, and straightway we learn that a gloom overspreads our entire community. We poor devils of survivors, who are nobodies, mere anonymous rubbish, are told that we are bereaved, orphaned, and left without salaried guides, because the Hon. So-and-So has ceased to draw his quarterly stipend from the treasury of the city or Commonwealth, and the Hon. X. Y. will no more travel at the national expense to Washington to represent us in Congress. It turns out that most of these famous men of the newspapers were and are "pushing" people. Then, again, the death of a prominent man is a real godsend to the newspapers, of which they make the most by spreading it over as much space as possible. Indeed, every incident and every notorious individual are magnified and dilated by the press out of all proportion to its or his importance. The advent of the long-haired, poetic lunatic, or "crank," known as Oscar Wilde, upon our shores is discussed by the press as if it was an event of first-rate importance. In this way the press is doing all it can to confound the public judgment and render it incapable of just discrimination. B.

The End of a Religion.

Under the above title, Henri Rochefort, the day after the civil burial of M. Herold, the eminent French freethinker, recently dead, who for so many years was prefect of the department of the Seine and consequently administrator of the municipal affairs of Paris, commented upon the services in the following words, translated from "L'Intransigeant":—

The civil burial of M. Herold is the most serious service that that senatorial functionary ever rendered in his life, or rather in his death, to the cause of the Republic and of liberty of conscience.

His conduct in persisting in his freethought even to the tomb and including it was the more meritorious in that he was born a Protestant, and that the adepts of that religion, which calls itself reformed although it has a horror of reforms, are devotees even more fanatical than the Catholics.

Littré, in dying under the auspices of the church, forever compromised his memory. Herold has just assured his. The example that he, prefect of the Seine, has had the courage to set to the city whose affairs he administered will do more to scatter the mass of absurdities agglomerated under the name of Christianity than all our articles and all our preaching. Not ten years ago the absence of the priest from the obsequies of a citizen was considered by the least devout as an eccentricity in bad taste, and by the faithful as the last word of scoundrelism. Such prefects as the Ducros and the Nadaillacs could post decrees with impunity, obliging bodies intended for civil burial to be taken away at five o'clock in the morning, at the same hour as the rubbish heaped before our doors.

Relatives were not even allowed to follow to their last resting-place the bodies of these pestiferous persons, and there was talk of adding a corner for them to the cemetery set apart for the executioner's victims.

The old St. Simonian, Félicien David, having refused the aid of holy water and of the last prayers, the detachment which accompanied the hearse of this officer of the Legion of Honor received from its colonel an order to turn back as soon as he learned that they were proceeding directly from the house of the dead to Père-Lachaise.

To-day, the first magistrate of the capital of France disdainfully rejects the aspergill, the *De profundis*, the mass for the dead, even though in music; and all those who, but a few years ago, would have veiled their faces before an atheism so pronounced,—the president of the senate, the prefect of police, the president of the chamber of commerce, the governor of Paris, the president of the Republic in the person of his representative,—have marched in the procession with the air of people scandalized not the least in the world, talking of matters quite other than the eternal flames which the deceased nevertheless could not escape.

Now there is no room for delusion concerning the significance of a civil burial. It is no longer simply the negation of the bagatelles of Catholicism, such as the immaculate conception, the infallibility of the pope, the real presence of Jesus Christ in a wafer of flour which serves to make angels and which might serve quite as well to make pancakes; it is the rejection *in toto* of all the dogmas on which rests the immense mystification which is the basis of the Christian as of every other religion. No more immortality of the soul, no more last judgment, no more paradise, no more creator: uncreated matter, whence the body came and whither it returns. For the great argument of the priests is this:

"Who could have created the world, if not God?"

But they have never answered the question with which the atheists ever confront them:

"If nothing can create itself unaided, tell us, then, who created God?"

These are the theories that have been sanctioned by the senators, deputies, high dignitaries, and official personages who ranged themselves around M. Herold's tomb.

Though some may not have attached to this deeply serious fact all the importance which it merits, surely the clergy have measured its potent consequences.

Henceforth civil burial, no longer a matter of private conviction merely, is a constituent part of the public morals. Yesterday religious obsequies were the rule. To-morrow they will be the exception.

The Coming Revolution.

The coming revolution will bear a character of universality which will distinguish it from all preceding revolutions. It will be no longer one country that will rush into the fray, but the combined nations of the world. Formerly a localized revolution was possible, but now, with all the bonds of union and the commerce between all the countries of Europe, it will be impossible to confine a revolution if it lasts a certain time. This will be more certainly the case now than it was even in 1848, in consequence of the freer interchange of ideas which takes place at the present time, and which it is our duty and our interest to develop and encourage by way of preparation for the international revolution, which must consume the old society of Europe before we can build up the new social edifice.

In 1848 the insurgent towns placed their trust in changes of government, or in constitutional reforms, but such would not be the case at the present time. The working man of Paris, Lyons, or Marseilles, will not wait to receive the accomplishment of his desires from any government, not even from the free commune; he will set to work himself, and say to himself, "That will be so much the more finished and done with." The Russian people will not wait for a constituent assembly to give them the land they cultivate; they will take it themselves, and at once. It will be the same with Italy and Spain; and, if a certain number of German workingmen allow themselves to be bamboozled by half-hearted or treacherous leaders of their party in Parliament who urge them to wait for constitutional reforms, the example of their neighbors will not be long in teaching them the true revolutionary road. To sum up briefly, the approaching revolution will be effected by the people, "without waiting for it to fall from on high like manna from heaven." Friends! we who are the people have had to make many sacrifices in the past, and we still have to make them; unjust sacrifices extorted from us against our will, and sacrifices which we earnestly desire to free ourselves from; sacrifices of time and health, of comfort, of instruction, of home affections, and of all that constitutes the happiness of life and makes it worth living. Yet we have another sacrifice to make, and, until we do so cheerfully, I fear that we shall not play our part in the great work of emancipation. We must sacrifice one by one, or, better still, altogether, those prejudices, those thousand prejudices, which we have inherited, and which are the only heritage that most of us have received. But among these prejudices there is one which deserves all our attention, not only because it is the basis of our modern institutions, but because we find traces of it in nearly all the social theories which have been put forward by reformers. The prejudice I refer to is that which consists in putting faith in representative government, or government by proxy. Toward the end of the last century the French people overturned the monarchy, and the last of the absolute kings expiated on the scaffold, not only his own crimes, but also those of his predecessors. Well, it would appear that at the very time when everything which was good or great or lasting in the revolutionary work had been accomplished, thanks to the energy and on the responsibility of individuals or of groups, and thanks also to the weakness of the central power,—it would seem, I say, that at that very time the people were preparing to return under the yoke of a new power. And such was the case. Under the influence of governmental prejudices, and deceived by the appearance of Liberty supposed to be enjoyed by the peoples of England and America under the constitutions of those countries, the French people hastened to give itself constitutions which it has never wearied of changing. Later, the example of France has been followed by all the nations of Europe, with the single exception of Russia; all, at different times, have shaken off the yoke of despotic personal rule to place themselves under the thumb of assemblies of representatives. Even under the Commune of 1871 a decided tendency to parliamentarism was at times shown. Happily, however, a new light is breaking upon the eyes of the people with reference to this matter, and they are beginning to see that the best way to be free is not to be too much represented, not to abandon everything either to Providence or to their deputies, but to conduct and administer their affairs themselves.

H. DROZER.

LONDON, December, 1881.

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